

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, here we go again. Absolutely amazing. Medicare is going bankrupt, and the Democrats are doing absolutely nothing about it. They come up behind the podium just like they did last year, telling us that the Republicans are cutting Medicare when they know it is not the truth. The Washington Post spells it out. Last year during the demagoguery, the Washington Post accused the Democrats of shameless demagoguery to try to scare seniors because "they know that is where the votes are."

Then, Washington Post columnist Robert Samuelson took it a step forward and called the President of the United States and the Democrats liars on Medicare. Why? Because it is clear. Medicare is going bankrupt and the Democrats are doing nothing about it.

They do not care about my 93-year-old grandmother. They do not care about my parents. They do not care about the millions of seniors who will be without Medicare in 5 years if we do not do something about it today.

They do not care. John Lennon wrote a song called "How Do You Sleep at Night." I think it should be their theme song for the 1996 election.

LEGISLATION OF THE 104TH CONGRESS

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, this House Republican leadership has turned over the job of writing much of our legislation to special interest lobbyists. They gather here at the Capitol weekly to write the Nation's business. So, it is little wonder that now with the election approaching, they have begun a corruption search to cover their own misdeeds.

The latest chapter in this is this callous act of raising these accusations about the death of Ron Brown at the very time his family still grieves. The Speaker said yesterday, Reagan was teflon, Clinton is flypaper, this stuff is going to start to stick.

The only thing stuck around here is this Republican leadership. It is stuck in the gutter because of its own misdeeds and now these callous accusations.

WELFARE REFORM

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, today, once again, we will try to take the President at his word on welfare reform. Only 3 weeks ago President Clinton endorsed the Wisconsin works plan which substitutes work and responsibility for dependence and despair. It was adopted by sweeping bipartisan majorities in the Wisconsin State Legislature. Yet Federal roadblocks still prevent that plan from going into effect.

President Clinton said he endorsed the plan just a couple of weeks ago. He said we should get it done. Now we get hemming and hawing from the administration. In fact, some administration officials signaled that the President did not mean what he said. But maybe they are not being fair to their boss.

The cynics point this out, after saying that he wanted to end welfare as we know it, remember that, the President vetoed welfare reform. Then he vetoed it again. The cynics say that we have to be a bit skeptical of the President's words. But heck with those cynics.

Mr. Speaker, let us give the President what he says he wants and what the people of Wisconsin really do want. To quote the President, "We should get it done."

Let us overhaul the terrible welfare system that we have in this country and let us do it in Wisconsin for the folks there who want to overhaul the welfare system.

COMMERCE SECRETARY RON BROWN

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, once again House Speaker NEWT GINGRICH has gone too far. He is alleging that the Commerce Department workers might have shredded documents after Secretary Brown's fatal crash in Croatia and that the staff delayed reporting this airplane crash with 26 incredible Americans on board. According to Gingrich's staff, the Speaker is, and I quote, "Suggesting there might have been a coverup to get rid of Brown's papers after he died."

This is extreme. It is irresponsible. It is not the behavior of a congressional leader.

When questioned about it, the Speaker's office responded, and I again quote, "I think they are serious allegations, if subsequent facts support them, if subsequent facts support them, I think it is something other news outlets ought to look at and other agencies."

In other words, we are going to make an outrageous allegation and then we are going to hope that eventually someone comes up with the facts to support it.

Has not the family of Commerce Secretary Ron Brown suffered enough? Speaker GINGRICH, who did not even attend the funeral, owes the Brown family a public apology for making this irresponsible and fictional allegation.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina). The Chair admonishes Members not to refer to the President in terms personally offensive, as occurred during the remarks of the gentleman from Florida.

A BALANCED BUDGET

(Mr. LINDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, the last 20 minutes discussion on Medicare is only a symbol of what has been wrong in this town for 30 years. This body and the other has been voting benefits to America's citizens and said do not worry, you are not going to have to pay for them. We are going to pass this bill on to your grandchildren. That is why we must have a balanced budget and a balanced budget amendment and it makes sense.

But more than just common sense. It is a promise to our children and grandchildren that we will not continue runaway government spending at their expense. When my grandsons are old enough to ask me, I do not want to have to explain to them why they are paying \$3,500 every year in taxes just for interest on the national debt and why over their lifetime they will pay \$187,000 in taxes just to pay interest on the debt.

I refuse to say to them, your future is mortgaged and your country is bankrupt. That is why House Republicans have kept their promise to the American people and passed the balanced budget amendment. Now the Senate can do the same. All we need is for President Clinton to keep his word.

Governor Clinton supported a balanced budget, but last year President Clinton persuaded six Democrat Senators to change their vote and defeat the amendment. I hope the President will begin to get his actions in step with his words.

BASELESS ALLEGATIONS

(Mr. LEWIS of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I read with disbelief an article in the Washington Post this morning. It reported that the Speaker of this House has made baseless, unsubstantiated allegations about our late Secretary of Commerce, Ron Brown.

Ron Brown died in service to his country just 2 short months ago when his plane crashed during a trade mission to Bosnia. The Brown family is still in mourning, but for the Speaker of the House the death of this great man is something to be exploited for political gain.

Mr. Speaker, how low will you go? Is there a shred of decency left in your body? Is there anything you would not say for partisan political gain. You bring disrespect to yourself and to this institution by making such outrageous and baseless charges.

You owe us all an apology. You owe the Brown family an apology. You owe this Congress an apology and you owe this Nation an apology.

Mr. Speaker, you might not be the most unpopular public figure in history

if you started showing a little common decency and respect.

□ 1030

PERMISSION FOR SUNDRY COMMITTEES AND THEIR SUBCOMMITTEES TO SIT TODAY DURING THE 5-MINUTE RULE

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the following committees and their subcommittees be permitted to sit today while the House is meeting in the Committee of the Whole House under the 5-minute rule: the Committee on Agriculture; the Committee on Banking and Financial Services; the Committee on Commerce; the Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities; the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight; the Committee on International Relations; the Committee on the Judiciary; the Committee on National Security; the Committee on Resources; the Committee on Science; the Committee on Small Business; the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

It is my understanding that the minority has been consulted and there is no objection to these requests.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3562, WISCONSIN WORKS WAIVER APPROVAL ACT

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 446 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 446

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 3562) to authorize the State of Wisconsin to implement the demonstration project known as "Wisconsin Works". The amendment printed in section 2 of this resolution shall be considered as adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate on the bill, as amended, which shall be equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means or their respective designees; (2) one motion to amend by Representative Kleczka of Wisconsin or his designee, which shall be considered as read and shall be separately debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. The amendment to the bill considered as adopted pursuant to the first section of this resolution is as follows:

In section 1(d) of the bill, strike "subsection (b)(2) exceeds the amount described in subsection (b)(1)" and insert in lieu thereof "subsection (b)(1) exceeds the amount described in subsection (b)(2)".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON] is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield 30 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from Boston, MA [Mr. MOAKLEY], pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for purposes of debate only.

(Mr. SOLOMON asked and was given permission to include extraneous material.)

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 446 is a modified closed rule providing for consideration of H.R. 3562, the Wisconsin Works Waiver Approval Act. The rule provides 1 hour of debate, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Ways and Means or their respective designees. The rule allows one amendment to be offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. KLECZKA] and provides 1 hour of debate on the amendment, to be equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent. The rule provides that an amendment contained in section 2 of the resolution shall be considered as adopted. This change to the bill is necessary to correct a technical drafting error which has been cleared with the minority.

Finally, this rule provides one motion to recommit, with or without instructions. The rule before the House is abundantly fair. It makes in order a minority substitute and provides adequate debate time. It was reported by the Committee on Rules yesterday by a voice vote, noncontroversial.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation before the House this morning is proceeding on an admittedly hurried timetable, out of sincere desire to accommodate the President of the United States. On May 19, 1996, President Clinton announced his support for Wisconsin's landmark welfare reform plan and suggested it be implemented immediately. He said, "The plan has the makings of a solid, bold welfare reform plan." He intoned that to his radio listeners. He said further, "We should get it done now."

Mr. Speaker, if someone who had not followed this issue had heard the President's radio address, they might easily come away with the impression that this is a man who supports real welfare reform. As with all things, he sounded perfectly convincing. The record, Mr. Speaker, is quite another story. The President has vetoed genuine and compassionate welfare reform on two separate occasions, once in the context of a bill to balance the budget in 7 years, a terribly important bill; another, the stand-alone welfare bill, he vetoed in the middle of the night, during a huge snowstorm here in Washington.

Mr. Speaker, the Wisconsin Works plan ironically contains many of the features of the two welfare reform bills that President Clinton has already vetoed. It requires, and this is so, so im-

portant, it requires work, contains a time limit on benefits, and it ends the auto pilot spending that has busted Federal and State budgets for the past two decades, and even more.

Mr. Speaker, over the next few hours, we will hear Members on the other side of the aisle suggest that we should let the waiver process work and allow for adequate time for Federal officials to study this. They are going to say that in just a few minutes. This is essentially, Mr. Speaker, a defense of the status quo, and that is not good enough. It is essentially a defense of the convoluted and failed national welfare system. We all know what that has done.

Mr. Speaker, the present waiver process, in which innovative Governors trudge to Washington to receive a blessing to implement new welfare reforms, is an absolute sham. Mr. Speaker, if the States received block grants of the sort envisioned in our welfare reform bills, rejected by the President, Governors would not need to make this embarrassing pilgrimage here to Washington.

Under the present system, after a State legislature and a Governor have approved a measure which requires Federal waivers, Federal bureaucrats then are free to change those requests, to stall them, to deny them completely, and they often do. These bureaucrats view the requests for waivers from Federal rules as a negotiation in which details could be changed.

Mr. Speaker, this is how the White House Deputy Chief of Staff, Harold Ickes, described the process just 3 days after the President endorsed the Wisconsin Works plan. Evidently, they were not working together or seeing eye to eye or something.

Members of the House yesterday in the Committee on Rules, we heard testimony that several States, including California, including the State of the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS], have waivers pending for welfare reform before this President.

If Congress takes no action this year in the direction of welfare reform, my State of New York will be forced to present a lengthy list of waivers necessary in order to implement proposed welfare changes from Governor Pataki's budget, which is already busted and has to be fixed.

Mr. Speaker, the way to ensure that this is not necessary is to pass yet another comprehensive welfare reform bill, which we will do in just a few weeks, and for President Clinton to courageously sign it, not to veto it and talk different each time.

This waiver process for Wisconsin and the debate it has engendered is in itself an argument for our larger welfare reform bill. We have to get it out here and get it passed as soon as possible. If the President sees fit to approve these necessary and very compassionate policy decisions for one State in the country, why not sign a comprehensive national program of welfare reform?